GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
RAILWAYS
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:281
ANSWERED ON:22.03.2017
VIP Quota in Trains
Malviya Prof. Chintamani;Ray Dr. Ravindra Kumar

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposes to make HOR/VIP quota paperless in the Railways so as to save paper and if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor ;

(b) the average number of requisitions made by the Members of Parliament under the above quota in a year;

(c) whether instances of emergency quota released on the basis of forged/fake letters have been reported in the recent past and if so, the details thereof along with the corrective action taken thereon; and

(d) whether multiple bookings and no show by VIPs have caused much inconvenience to the travelling public as waitlisted tickets were not confirmed and if so, the details thereof and the corrective action taken thereon?

Answer

MINISTER OF RAILWAYS

(SHRI SURESH PRABHAKAR PRABHU)

(a) to (d): A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

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STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (d) OF STARRED QUESTION NO.281 BY PROF. CHINTAMANI MALVIYA AND DR. RAVINDRA KUMAR RAY TO BE ANSWERED IN LOK SABHA ON 22.03.2017 REGARDING VIP QUOTA IN TRAINS

(a): In order to meet the urgent travel requirements of High Official Requisition (HOR) holders (like Cabinet Ministers, Speaker of Lok Sabha, Governors, Chief Justice/Judges of Hon'ble Supreme Court/High Courts, etc.), Members of Parliament, and others including Members of Legislative Assemblies/ Councils, former Members of Parliament, Government officials, cancer patients, general passengers etc, who are required to travel at short notice, a limited number of berths/seats have been earmarked as Emergency Quota (EQ) in different trains and in different classes.

For HOR holders and Hon'ble Members of Parliament holding waitlisted ticket, confirmed accommodation is provided out of Emergency Quota even if no written request is received. Hence, to this extent it is already paperless. For the remaining paperless mode has not been adopted due to the following reasons:-
(i) It will deprive those persons who do not have access to internet.

(ii) In case of any investigation/court case, documentary evidence is required which will not be there in case it is made paperless.

(iii) At present, it is easier to verify the genuineness in case of physical request than online request.

However, with a view to promote cashless ticketing system and to promote cashless transactions various initiatives have been taken by Indian Railways including the following:-

i. Provision of facility of online booking of reserved tickets through Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC) website. The payment for tickets booked through IRCTC website is made through various cashless modes such as net banking, through credit/debit cards, cash cards and e-wallets.

ii. The facility of booking unreserved ticket including journey, season and platform tickets through mobile phone has been introduced in all suburban sections of Central, Western, Southern, Eastern, South Central, South Eastern and Delhi-Palwal section of Northern Railway. Additional payment options under the digital modes have also been introduced to widen the scope of digital payments for purchase of unreserved tickets. Further, facility of renewal of season tickets through IRCTC website has been provided for suburban train services on Western and Central Railways wherein payment is made through electronic mode.

iii. It has been decided to install 10,000 Point of Sale (POS) machines in association with State Bank of India at various locations of Indian Railways i.e. PRS locations, UTS locations, Parcel/Goods locations. At present, more than 4000 POS machines have been

installed over the Zonal Railways.

iv. An advanced version of the mobile application for booking of reserved tickets has also been launched by IRCTC giving additional options of cashless payment.

v. Service charge on online booking of tickets has been withdrawn for the tickets booked from 23.11.2016 to 31.03.2017.

vi. Service charge applicable on transactions against credit/debit cards for purchasing journey tickets at Unreserved Ticketing System (UTS)/ Passenger Reservation System (PRS) counters has been withdrawn.

vii. Online booking facility for accredited press correspondents on the basis of registered ID card has been launched.

viii. International Credit/ Debit cards issued outside India are accepted for booking of e-tickets through IRCTC website.

ix. Free accidental insurance cover of upto `10 lakh for confirmed/RAC passengers in case of tickets booked online from 10.12.2016 to 31.03.2017.

x. Provision of 0.5% discount on season tickets purchased through digital means with effect from 01.01.2017.

xi. Provision of 5% discount on payment made online for availing services like online booking of retiring rooms with effect from 01.01.2017.

(b) As per extant instructions the requisitions pertaining to release of Emergency Quota are to be preserved for a period of at least three months from the date of journey. On a daily basis, Indian Railways on an average handles Emergency Quota in different classes of more than 3500 trains across all Zonal Railways for which a large number of requests from various quarters are received and hence it is practically not feasible to collect and compile information of such requests category-wise.

As such these requests are preserved for the stipulated period but are not compiled.

(c): Isolated instances of requests received on fake/forged letter-heads for release of berth out of Emergency Quota do come to notice and action as per provisions of law is taken in such cases. Instructions have also been issued that the requests received from various quarters for release of berths out of Emergency Quota should be checked from time to time and where there is a doubt about the genuineness of the requests/letters, the position may be checked up by speaking to the person concerned on phone for ensuring the genuineness of the requisition.

(d): Some instances of making multiple reservations on the same day in different trains in the same/different directions by high dignitaries do come to notice where it is not feasible to undertake journey on the same day. The train(s) in which high dignitaries do not travel, goes vacant whereas the passengers on waiting list cannot board the train. With a view to streamline this procedure and to facilitate booking/cancellation of reserved tickets online, it has been decided to provide the facility of booking reserved tickets by Hon'ble Members of Parliament/former Members of Parliament through internet.

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